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Pedestrian Paris: Walking through the City of Lights

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Omantel



On behalf of my colleagues at Oman Air, it is my pleasure to welcome you on board your flight today.

I am delighted to say that Oman Air's commitment to continuously improving our in-flight products and services has recently taken a further step forward. Our newly-created Products and Brand Development Division monitors and raises standards in areas such as food and beverage, service equipment, amenities and in-flight entertainment.

New aircraft design and Airport Catering also fall within the new Division's remit. My team and I – as head of the division – are already working hard to improve our customer experience and branding. Very soon you will experience innovative, cutting-edge services at every stage of your journey, both on the ground and in-flight.

An early part of our work is to reconfigure our fleet of Airbus A330-200 aircraft. The modification is being carried out at the Airbus Corporate Jet Centre (ACJC) in Toulouse, and the work on the first aircraft has already been completed and reintroduced to the Oman Air fleet. The back-to-back approach that we are taking with this project will help us to avoid any disruption to your travel plans.

The key feature of this retrofit is the introduction of enhanced comfort for our guests. By installing award-winning new flat-bed suites, designed by BE Aerospace, we are able to increase the number of Business Class seats we offer on each aircraft. Installation of the state-of-the-art Thales Integrated In-Flight

Marhaba

Entertainment System in all classes will provide an even more enjoyable passenger experience for our valued customers. All four aircraft are expected to be back in service by the second week of July 2016.

We have also added a fourth B787-8 Dreamliner to our fleet which will be utilized on our European and Far-Eastern sectors. It will be joined later this year by four more B737NGs – aircraft that serve a wide range of destinations, including the new service to the Iranian city of Mashhad which we launched on the 1st June this year. This exciting destination offers another welcome opportunity to experience our outstanding warmth and hospitality and world-class on-board service.

On the ground, premium customers are able to enjoy our exclusive new lounge-to-aircraft chauffeur service at Muscat International Airport. It is available for every Business Class passenger, ensuring an effortlessly comfortable start to any journey. Meanwhile, work continues on creating outstanding new First Class and Business Class Lounges in a new terminal at Muscat International Airport. They are expected to open soon and will enable premium passengers to relax and rejuvenate before boarding.

On behalf of Oman Air, the national airline of the Sultanate of Oman, thank you for choosing Oman Air and we look forward to welcoming you on-board again very soon.

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WINGS OF OMAN

Oman Air's inflight magazine is issued by :

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Cover Image: GettyImages
Singapore Coffee Festival/
www.sgcoffee festival.com.sg
YogaFest Amsterdam/www.
yogafestinternational.com/TommyNLance
Glastonbury Music Festival/Shutterstock
Monster Truck Show/Shutterstock
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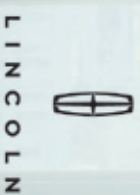
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Oman Air Network News: Oman Air
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Singapore Coffee Festival

Where: Singapore

When: 9 June – 12 June

What: With over 100 exhibitors from the coffee and café industry, this month's SCF is an exciting festival first for coffee lovers who want to learn more about what goes into making a good cup of coffee. Want to sample top coffee roasts from around the world? And experience live on-site home barista challenge showcases, educational talk sessions from experts in the coffee industry, local kopi (kopi is the local Malay/Hokkien term for coffee) and much more? Then come to the Singapore Coffee Festival! **Oman Air flies 7 times a week between Muscat/Singapore**



YogaFest Amsterdam

Where: Amsterdam, Netherlands

When: 18 June – 19 June

What: YogaFest International serves to connect a world-wide yoga community and spread the benefits of yoga, and the yoga lifestyle. This month's YogaFest Amsterdam will be held at the Westergasfabriek in Amsterdam – a 14 hectare public green space in the central part of the city. The festival is for anyone that loves, or is new to yoga, say the organisers, and it will feature a line-up of highly qualified and experienced yoga instructors and yoga personalities. **Oman Air flies 7 times a week between Muscat/Amsterdam (via code share flights with KLM)**

Festivals around the world

Vibrant Music and Paint Festival
(18 June, Manila, Philippines).

Munich Film Festival
(23 June – 2 July, Munich, Germany).

Malaysian Mega Sale Carnival
(Throughout June, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia).

Glastonbury Music Festival

Where: Pilton, England

When: 22 June – 26 June

What: Glastonbury Festival is a five-day festival of contemporary performing arts that takes place near Pilton, in Somerset, England. In addition to contemporary music, the festival hosts dance, comedy, theatre, circus, cabaret, and other arts. This music festival has a lineup of some of the world's most talented artists, and the crowd is composed of everyone from hippies to hipsters. 'Pack your rain boots, pitch a tent, and get ready for one of the muddiest, most musical weekends of your life!' say the organisers. **Oman Air flies 14 times a week between Muscat/London**



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Monster Truck Show

Where: Manila, Philippines

When: 18 June – 19 June

What: This month's Monster Jam truck show will once again feature huge, four-metre tall, five-ton Monster trucks – racing and roaring their way around a custom-designed track full of obstacles. It truly is a festival of monster machines, and as always, what makes the event extra special is that at the pre-event party, you have the chance to meet the Monster Truck drivers face-to-face, and get their autographs and pictures.

Oman Air flies 7 times a week between Muscat/Manila



Events around the world

Malaysia King's Birthday Celebrations
(4 June, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia).

Milan Men's Fashion Week
(18 June – 21 June, Milan, Italy).

Stonehenge Summer Solstice (20 June, Wiltshire, England).



Paris 'Fête de la Musique' World Music Day

Where: Paris, France

When: 21 June

What: Launched in 1982, the Paris Fête de la Musique, also called World Music Day, takes place on the longest day of the year and celebrates music in all its forms. Live bands present free concerts throughout the city, and celebrations take on a carnival feel and offer visitors a chance to join in the fun at many spectacular Paris locations. **Oman Air flies 6 times a week between Muscat/Paris**



Ramadan Night Market

Where: Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE

When: 23 June – 2 July

What: A bigger, better and more exciting Ramadan Night Market will return this Ramadan and Eid to offer you and your family a wonderful time. Besides the huge array of shopping on offer, the event will also feature a food court, a massive kids play area alongside a grand Arabic-themed Majlis and an exclusive henna painting section for ladies. There will also be a trampoline for kids, aeroplane ride, train rides, climbing mountain for teens, a rodeo bull, and much more on offer. **Oman Air flies 70 times a week between Muscat/Dubai (49 Oman Air) (21 code share flights with Emirates)**

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Hockey Champions Trophy

Where: London, England

When: 10 June – 17 June (Men), 18 June – 26 June (Women)

What: This is the hockey world's most glamorous event – featuring only the most exceptional international teams. Currently a six-team tournament, teams earn their place based on performance at the previous Champions Trophy and Champions Challenge. This month's event will include Australia, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, India, and South Korea in the men's section; and Argentina, Australia, Great Britain, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the USA in the women's section. Don't miss out on the action! **Oman Air flies 14 times a week between Muscat/London**



Swiss 'Tour de Suisse' Cycling Tour

Where: Various route locations, Switzerland

When: 11 June – 19 June

What: The Tour de Suisse is one of the world's greatest cycle races, and made up of several stages that wind their way through some of Switzerland's most scenic (and interesting and challenging) terrain. Besides the top-level sporting action from the pros, there is also a lot going on for cycling fans and spectators. On the two weekends that form part of the event, amateur cyclists can compete against each other on the original course as individuals or in teams, while families can enjoy the event's Bike Expo, which showcases the latest in bikes, cycling clothing, nutrition and leisure cycling gear. **Oman Air flies 5 times a week between Muscat/Zurich**

Sport around the world

Darts World Cup

(2 June – 5 June, Frankfurt, Germany).

FIVB World Grand Prix Volleyball

(3 June – 10 July, Bangkok, Thailand).

Nad Al Sheba Sports Tournament

(8 June – 27 June, Dubai, UAE).

Mumbai Monsoon Madness Half Marathon

(26 June, Aarey, Mumbai, India).

Wimbledon Tennis Championship

(27 June – 10 July, Wimbledon, London, England).

Dubai Sports World 2016

Where: Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE

When: 21 June – 29 August

What: For two-and-a-half months, Dubai Sports World provides you with an opportunity to take part in a stunning array of sporting competitions, events and coaching workshops – from football, to extreme sports, to fitness sports, and more – all at the UAE's largest indoor summer sports venue, the World Trade Centre. Whether you are a recreational athlete, a professional, or a spectator, this is where you can connect with your sport in the way that you like best. **Oman Air flies 70 times a week between Muscat/Dubai (49 Oman Air) (21 code share flights with Emirates)**





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Musandam Peninsula

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The Sultanate of Oman's Musandam Peninsula enclave contains some of the most spectacular seascapes and mountainous terrain on the Arabian Peninsula – including dozens of fjord-like 'khors', where sea cliffs hundreds of metres high drop down directly into sparkling Arabian Gulf waters. It's a dream destination for adventurous travellers and explorers.

- 1 As an enclave of the Sultanate of Oman, the Musandam Peninsula is separated from the rest of the country by the United Arab Emirates. It juts out into the Strait of Hormuz – the narrow entry into the Arabian Gulf – from the Arabian Peninsula. Covering only around 3 000 km², the Musandam is the smallest governorate in the Sultanate.
- 2 The port of Khasab, with its picturesque harbour and small town, is the capital of Musandam and the main launching point for dhow cruises, dive trips, sea-kayaking, mountain treks and other adventures.
- 3 One of the defining Musandam experiences is a multiple-day sailing trip (or even just a short sunset cruise) on a traditional wooden Omani dhow. It makes for an unforgettable adventure that combines the best of Oman's maritime heritage, with the best of the Arabian Peninsula's shoreline and sea.
- 4 Another favourite dhow adventure is a cruise to the Telegraph Island – the small rocky island that was used as a base to boost telegraph messages along the London-to-Karachi undersea cable in the 1800s.
- 5 There are over 20 well known dive sites in the area. The Musandam Peninsula's deep water fjords are where an abundance of underwater treasures can be found for all levels of scuba diver – from beautiful wall dives, to coral gardens, to shipwrecks, and an incredibly rich diversity of marine life.
- 6 Some of the fishing villages located around Musandam are hidden away deep in the fjords and have remained isolated from the rest of the world for hundreds of years. One of them is Kumzar, which has been inhabited for hundreds of years, and which is still only accessible by boat.
- 7 Built in the 17th century by the Portuguese, Khasab Castle has overlooked the Strait of Hormuz for many years. These days, you can visit the castle's central tower, which houses a display of 'jerz' – the traditional long-handled axes carried by the tribesmen of Musandam – along with other exhibits.
- 8 At just over 2 000 metres high, Jebel Harim is one of Musandam's most prominent peaks. It's a steep climb to the top (either by hiking, or by four-wheel-drive), but once you're at the top, the views are spectacular. Bring your camera!
- 9 Dolphin watching tours out on the fjords can easily be arranged with one of several tour operators based in Khasab.
- 10 With a large fishing community in Khasab, and a handful of small fishing villages dotted around the peninsula, Musandam is well known for its seafood dishes and freshly grilled fish. Of course, there's nothing like catching your own dinner, and it's possible to charter a local boat to go on a day's fishing outing and do exactly this.

Getting to Musandam

Oman Air flies daily to Khasab, from Muscat. It's also possible to drive from Muscat to Musandam, but you'll have to enter and exit via the UAE border control points, which require the necessary entry visas.



Paris – the perfect city for exploring on foot

Pedestrian Paris: Walking through the City of Lights

You'd need weeks, months, years – or perhaps a lifetime – to fully explore and experience all of what Paris is about. Here are some classic walking tours and walking areas in 'The City of Lights' that will make for a good start.

Walking along its café-lined streets, past its famous landmarks and monuments, and through its many fascinating museums and galleries? Going for a romantic stroll with your loved one over the River Seine bridges, or visiting Paris's much-loved food markets? Or making your way on foot around the city with your camera in

hand – revelling in the photo opportunities? Experienced travellers will agree that by far the best way to get up close and personal with the real, authentic Paris is on foot – by walking. 'Walking: that's the secret,' says the renowned Time Out travel guide, about walking around Paris. 'Your best chance of hearing this city's



The best way to see Paris is to let a local show you around

heartbeat lies in putting one foot in front of the other, above ground, among the people who live and work here; only then will you be able to see the 'museum city' clichés for what they are.' Here are a few ideas...

Do a River Seine stroll: A walk along the famous River Seine – and its quaysides, islands, left bank, right bank, and over its bridges, is a Paris travel tradition not to be missed. You can do it on your own, or join one of the several guided tours that will take you through the area's history.

Go on a fashion walk: Several fashion walks are on offer in Paris – many of them led by guides who have worked in the industry – and who will lead you to the studios of world famous brands like Dior, Chanel, and Yves St Laurent. These walks are where you can experience first-hand the long and rich association Paris has had with fashion.

Indulge in a guided shopping tour: A handful of fashion and shopping experts will guide you through the myriad brands available in Paris.

Savour a food walk: Various food walking tours are on offer where, with help from expert guides and sometimes even chefs, you have the opportunity to visit a select number of local specialty food suppliers, and to taste what's on offer.

Do a free walking tour: One of the best ways to see a city is to let a local show you around. With this in mind, a brilliant opportunity to get to know Paris is to let the guides of the Discover Walks group show you around for free – although tips are welcome, of course. These guided walks (in English), take place every day in Paris except for the 24 and 25 December.

Walk up the Arc de Triomphe: Climb the 284 steps to the top of Paris's Arc de Triomphe – the city's second most iconic monument after the Eiffel Tower.

Travel Token: Souvenir Eiffel Tower

The Eiffel Tower is the most visited, paid-to-see monument in the world. Since 1998, it has received over 6 million visitors every year. The real tower is 324 metres high, but you can buy something a bit smaller to pack into your travel bag to take back home – and have the perfect reminder of your Paris vacation!





The 324 metre-high Eiffel Tower is the most visited, paid-to-see monument in the world

Get spooked walking the Catacombs: The Catacombs consist of kilometres of tunnels lined with the remains (including bones and skulls) of long-dead Parisians. They were created in the late 18th century to stop disease from spreading, and they now make for a somewhat spooky but interesting walking tour experience.

Stroll through the Jardin des Plantes gardens: Paris's botanical gardens contain more than 10 000 species and the exquisitely curated landscapes here are not only a memorable place to take a stroll, but offer an escape away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Do a Middle Ages history walk: This self-guided walking tour, run by the History Walks Paris tour operator, focuses

purely on Middle Ages Paris. It begins in the place where Paris originated on the Ile de la Cité and winds through a selection of what were once Paris's narrow, medieval streets. It also includes Notre-Dame, the Conciergerie and Sainte-Chapelle – which are three of the city's most famous Gothic buildings.

Walk the Batignolles district: At this fashionable inner-Paris enclave, it's perfectly possible to spend the entire afternoon or morning exploring its cafe culture, open air markets, resplendent gardens, bookshops and all-round true Parisian village spirit.

'By far the best way to get up close and personal with the real, authentic Paris is on foot – by walking'

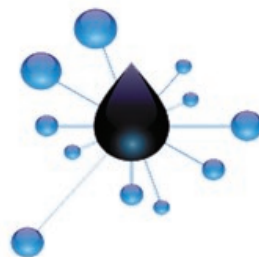


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Paris: City Facts

Oman Air flies 6 times a week between Muscat/Paris

Visa Requirements: There are no entry requirements into France for nationals of EU countries and various other European countries (including Switzerland). Citizens of Australia, the USA, Canada and New Zealand do not need visas to visit France for up to 90 days. Everyone else would require a Schengen Visa. Go to www.france.diplomatie.fr for more info on entry requirements, or visit your local French embassy.

Languages: French is almost exclusively spoken in Paris. English is also occasionally spoken by Parisians.

Currency: The official currency of Paris is the Euro (€/EUR). There are 100 cents in a Euro. Notes come in denominations of €500, €200, €100, €50, €20, €10 and €5. Coins come in €2, €1, 50c, 20c, 10c, 5c, 2c, and 1c denominations.

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Into the Desert: Adventure in Oman's deserts

The Sultanate's two main expanses of desert – the Sharqiyah Sands, and the famous Rub al Khali or 'Empty Quarter' – are intricately linked to the history and tradition and culture of Oman's desert people – the Bedouin. These days, visitors to the Sultanate can get a feel for what this traditional Bedouin way of life was like in days gone by – and they can also experience some modern-day desert adventures. Here's a look at what awaits the desert explorer in Oman.

Four-wheel-drive desert adventure

There are a number of four-wheel-drive desert tours now available in the Sultanate – usually done with highly experienced and knowledgeable guides. But the highlight four-wheel-drive

experience is an exploration of the famous Rub Al Khali, the 'Empty Quarter', in southern Oman. A tour here will have you exploring gigantic red and gold sand dunes, salt flats and oases, and you get to feel the sensation of being surrounded by deafening silence and



'Camel riding is effortless and you'll very soon be completely at ease on these Kings of the Desert'

sand, as the Bediyah Safari Tours group describes it. Rub Al Khali is one of the most stunning environments on earth – as well as a photographer’s dream destination.

Overnight with a Bedouin family

One of the classic desert experiences for visitors to the Sultanate is spending a night or two with a Bedouin family who still go about their nomadic, self-sustainable lifestyle in the traditional way. During this time, you will be required to live and exist exactly as these Bedouin do, and in turn, you will gain a deep insight into their way of life. At the 1000 Nights Camp in Sharqiyah Sands, for instance, you can arrange to visit a Bedouin family along with a guide and experience traditional Bedouin hospitality just for the day as well. The experience includes drinking traditional Omani ‘kahwa’ coffee; and a desert trek with a locally-based Bedouin guide.

‘Rub Al Khali is one of the most stunning environments on earth – as well as a photographer’s dream destination’

Oman: A legendary land of deserts

The Sultanate of Oman is home to two vast, sandy desert regions. The smaller of the two is the Sharqiyah Sands Desert in the eastern part of Oman, which runs in a north to south direction for around 200 kilometres, and is easily accessible by road from Muscat. The second desert region is the massive expanse of the Rub Al Khali or ‘Empty Quarter’, which is the largest sand desert in the world, encompassing most of the southern third of the Arabian Peninsula, and much of Oman. To find out more about exploring Oman’s deserts, visit www.omantourism.gov.om.





The traditional interior of one of Oman's luxury desert camps

Luxury desert retreat

Traditional nomadic ways of life in the desert are often associated with hard and sparse living conditions. But this is not the case at establishments like the prestigious Desert Nights Camp. Based in Sharqiyah Sands, this is where you can indulge in luxury Bedouin-style tents and enjoy a lavish existence in the desert. Air-conditioned luxury tents, cold towels to refresh yourself with, en-suite bathrooms, and a comfortable Omani-styled majilis sitting room are all part of the package. And in the evenings, you can 'drift into magical nights and feast on traditional Omani fare in the flickering glow of the campfire,' say your Desert Nights hosts.

Camel safari

A traditional camel safari is a magnificent way to explore Oman's deserts, and the rich culture and traditions that go with these

landscapes. Various camel riding adventures can be arranged while staying at establishments like the luxury Desert Nights Camp, and the exotic 1000 Nights Camp, both based in Sharqiyah Sands. Daily rides are typically around 4 to 5 hours long, with plenty of opportunities to hop off your ride and rest and relax. 'Camel riding is effortless and you'll very soon be completely at ease on these Kings of the Desert,' say the Bediyah Safari Tours group, who also offer camel safaris. Authentic Bedouin luxury camps will be pitched every night after the riding, and delicious, traditional food and Omani 'Kahwa' coffee will be prepared on a fire, under the stars.

'Afterwards, delicious traditional food and Omani 'Kahwa' coffee will be prepared on a fire, under the stars'



A lavish existence awaits the desert explorer in Oman



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Petronas Towers: Kuala Lumpur's identical masterpieces

Soaring to a height of 451.9 metres, the 88 storey high Petronas Towers are Kuala Lumpur's identical masterpieces, and the crown jewels of the city.



Kuala Lumpur is a cultural melting pot with excellent shopping, budget-friendly 5-star hotels, fantastic food and dozens of authentic nature and wilderness experiences close by. It is a dynamic city with much to offer every type of traveller. But the defining urban experience here has to be an ascent up its majestic Petronas Twin Towers.

Typically, this consists of an ascent up 170 metres of one of the building's two towers in a futuristically designed elevator, which opens onto the aptly-named Skybridge – the fantastical structure which connects the two towers together, and which lays claim to being the 'Highest two-storey bridge in the world.' After this, you ascend even higher up to the Observation Deck on Level 86, where you get access to absolutely breathtaking views of the world below. As you'd image, these are as spectacular during the day as they are at night.

'The defining urban experience here has to be an ascent up its majestic Petronas Twin Towers'

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Twin Towers History: How to design a landmark

Planning for the Petronas Towers started in January 1992, led by the distinguished architect Cesar Pelli along with DeeJay Cerico, J.C. Guinto and Dominic Saibo. Excavators began digging down to 30 metres below the surface of the site on March 1993, and this work required moving over 500 truckloads of earth every night.

The next stage was the single largest and longest concrete pour in Malaysian history. 13 200 cubic metres of concrete were continuously poured through a period of 54 hours for each tower. This record-breaking concrete slab with 104 piles now forms the foundation for each tower. From this floor, a 21 metre high retaining wall was built, with a perimeter length of over one kilometre. This concrete shell and the basement area it encloses required two years and up to 40 builders on site – working all day and all night.

The construction of the towers' superstructure commenced in April 1994, after rigorous tests and simulations of wind and structural loads on the design. Then, in June 1996, the towers were finally finished with their steel and glass outer structure. In fact, the Twin Towers' exterior now features 33 000 stainless steel and 55 000 special 'Vision Glass' panels, with light filtering and noise reduction properties to provide a comfortable inner environment.

The design of each of the Tower's floor plates is based on Islamic geometric forms of two interlocking squares, creating shapes of eight-pointed stars. Architecturally, these forms describe

important Islamic principles of 'Unity within unity, harmony, stability and rationality,' according to the Petronas Towers' official information guide.

The Towers are also 'intelligent' structures, and built with a system that seamlessly coordinates telecommunications, environment control, power supply, lighting, fire and smoke control, and building security.

Majestic by day and dazzling at night, Kuala Lumpur's Twin Towers symbolise the 'Courage, ingenuity, initiative, determination, energy, confidence, optimism, advancement and zest of a nation,' as Malaysia's former prime minister, Tun Mahathir Mohamad put it. It's hard not to agree. Next time you're in Kuala Lumpur, make sure you travel to the top!

'The Twin Towers' exterior now features 33 000 stainless steel and 55 000 special 'Vision Glass' panels, with light filtering and noise reduction properties'

Getting to the Petronas Twin Towers is easy. Take a train from any station within Klang Valley area and make your way to KLCC Station (KJ10). You can't miss the towers from here. For more information about visiting the Petronas Towers, and to purchase tickets to visit the Skybridge and Observation Deck, visit www.petronastwintowers.com.my



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Classic treks in Oman

Trekking is by far the best way to enjoy Oman's magnificent mountainous and coastal terrain. Here are three classics to get you started.

Muttrah Trek

This is a short, easy-to-do and easily-accessible mountain and wadi walk in Muscat that takes you from the Riyam Park area back to the Muttrah Corniche (or vice versa). The route partly follows the ancient overland path that linked Muttrah to Muscat and has spectacular views over the sea and coastline.

Distance: Around 2.5 kilometres. (The starting point is at sea level, and the high point is around 200 metres).

Start point location: The parking area off the Old Muscat Road in Riyam, marked with the C38 trekking route sign. Or, if you're walking from the corniche, from the information sign close to the entrance of the Muttrah Souq.

Trekking path through Jebel Akhdar villages

This well-established trek takes you from Al Aqur to Sayq (or the other way around) following ancient paths linking these two Jebel Akhdar mountain villages. This is some of Oman's most magnificent mountain terrain, and the views are exhilarating. Highlights include the villages' terraced farms, ancient falaj irrigation channels, and a chance to see a rosewater distillery in action.

Distance: Around 4 kilometres. (The starting point is from the off-road track 4 kilometres after the Hotel Al Jebel al Akhdar, marked with road signs and the W18b route information sign, either from Al Aqur or from Sayq).

Start point location: Follow the coloured markers from the information sign.

Trek to the southern summit of Jebel Shams

Starting at the Jebel Shams plateau (you will need an off-road vehicle to access this point), this classic trek follows the rim of the Saydran Gorge, a side wadi of the Jebel Shams 'Grand Canyon', to

an altitude of 2 700 metres. From there the path levels to reach the southern summit of Jebel Shams at an altitude of 3 000 metres. This is by far the best trek/walk to the top of Jebel Shams. The views are spectacular, and there's an added feel-good factor of knowing you're on top of the highest mountain in Oman.

Distance: Around 9 kilometres. (The estimated ascent time is 5 to 6 hours with a light pack, and the descent time is around 4 to 5 hours).

Start point location: At the W4 trekking route information sign, along the road to 'The Plateau'. (The closest town to the starting point is Al Hamra, which is just over 200 kilometres from Muscat).



For more information about trekking in the Sultanate, visit www.omantourism.gov.om. There are also dozens of tour operators based in Oman that offer guided trekking adventures at various destinations around the Sultanate.

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Oman Air rides the crest of the Extreme Sailing Series wave

When the Extreme Sailing Series was first launched in 2007, it was billed as sailing's equivalent to Twenty 20 cricket, promising short bursts of high octane action aimed at new crowds looking for a faster paced and up-close experience. The hype suggested the new series would be a game changer in how the sport was presented.

The billboards proved to be spot on. Over the past 10 years, the sport at this level has been transformed from static to dramatic with high performance craft, high speeds, high end gear and high blood pressure now the norm.

For the Extreme Sailing Series, innovation and bold enterprise have been enduring hallmarks so in 2016, to celebrate its 10th anniversary, the fleet was updated to go faster. GC32 foiling catamarans, as well as an exciting new venue, Lisbon, Portugal, was added to the tour which now boasts Germany, the UK, Turkey, Russia, China, Australia and of course Muscat in Oman which hosts the opening event of the series, as current venues.

Omani teams, fielded and trained by the national sporting organisation Oman Sail, enjoyed instant success when they first took part in 2009, and won the championship with their Extreme 40 boat, 'Masirah'. They won it again the following year with 'The Wave, Muscat' and have become the most successful nation in the event's history with championship wins in 2012, 2013 and the final event on the old non-foiling Extreme 40 catamarans in 2015. That finale

Ed is a three-time America's Cup sailor with five Sydney-Hobart races under his belt while 33 year-old Nasser has become an Extreme specialist having learned from some of the biggest names in world yacht racing including legends Sir Ben Ainslie and Loick Peyron.

Nasser started out as a swimmer, representing Oman in competitions around the Gulf and attending the World Youth Games in Moscow. This experience earned him a job as a lifeguard at the Al Bustan Inter Continental Palace hotel in Muscat where inevitably, he came into contact with boats on the beach and started sailing.

He soon started coaching sailing as well, and when he saw Oman Sail's advertisement for a sailing school instructor at their Bander Al Rowdha marina, he jumped at the chance and was appointed. He has gone on to becoming one of Oman's most widely known and successful elite athletes with a trophy cabinet and a CV that could secure him a professional sailing role anywhere in the world. His appetite for success is undimmed despite his victories and like the rest of the Oman Air crew, including new recruit James Wierzbowski, he remains steadfastly modest and proud.



coincided with the departure of champion skipper Leigh McMillan who was replaced this year by American Morgan Larson who is no stranger to the Oman Sail squad having represented Oman Air in 2012.

Despite the change to the boat and line-up, their winning habit continued and when the curtain went up on the first event of the season in Muscat in March this year, it was Oman Air that swept emphatically to victory. Larson immediately paid tribute to his stalwart crew of Pete Greenhalgh, Ed Smyth and Omani Nasser Al Mashari who had all been with the boat for two or more years and were key to their success. Veteran British sailor Greenhalgh is in his 4th year with Oman Sail but has already won three titles with them having previously been 49er European Champion in 2010 and a six-time National Champion in the Melges 24, 720, RS700, 18ft Skiff and International 14 boats.



The team's high profile successes attract global media attention for the Oman Air brand. With every victory, the sponsor's colours dominate television and newspaper coverage, raising awareness of the airline and providing an avenue to promote the Sultanate of Oman as a high-end tourism destination.

Recognising the opportunity to drive tourism to the Sultanate and travellers to the national carrier, in addition to fielding the lead competitor in the fleet, Oman Air became Official Airline Partner to the Extreme Sailing Series in May 2015. In addition to sailing, Oman Air sponsors sports such as football, golf, polo and car racing in a bid to gain global exposure for the airline and promote their award-winning services.

China lived up to its reputation of being a tricky venue with constantly shifting winds, fog and strong currents but despite breaking a jib, Oman Air showed why they are regarded as one of the favourites for the 2016 title with a show of dogged consistency, slick teamwork and unwavering passion.

Stay up to date with the Series by following the hashtags **#TEAMOMANAIR** and **#EXTREMESAILING** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



2016 Extreme Sailing Series™ standings

- 1st Oman Air (OMA) 23 points
- 2nd Alinghi (SUI) 21 points
- 3rd Red Bull Sailing Team (AUT) 21 points
- 4th Land Rover BAR Academy (GBR) 19 points
- 5th SAP Extreme Sailing Team (DEN) 15 points
- 6th Sail Portugal (POR) 13 points
- 7th One (CHN) 13 points
- 8th Team Turx (TUR) 11 points



Nasser Al Mashari (OMAN) – Bowman



Morgan Larson (USA) – Skipper/helm



Pete Greenhalgh (GBR) – Mainsail/trimmer



James Wierzbowski (AUS) – Bowman



Ed Smyth (AUS/NZL) – Headsail trimmer

Balloon Safari: Floating over the Serengeti National Park

Imagine quietly floating in a hot air balloon above the African plains and wildlife of Tanzania's Serengeti National Park? The good news is that it's entirely possible for you and your family.

The Serengeti region encompasses the Serengeti National Park itself, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Maswa Game Reserve, the Loliondo, Grumeti and Ikorongo Controlled Areas and the Maasai Mara National Reserve in Kenya. According to the Serengeti National Park's official travel guide, around 90 000 tourists visit the area every year. There are many attractions, but it is the Serengeti's famous wildlife migration that many of them come to see.

According to the Park's travel guide, 'Over a million wildebeest and about 200 000 zebras flow south from the northern hills to the southern plains for the short rains every year in October and November, and then swirl west and north after the long rains in April, May and June. So strong is the ancient instinct for these animals to move, that no drought, no rocky gorge, and not even a crocodile infested river can hold them back.'

Of course, with all this going on, the Serengeti may be the most beautiful area in the world for a hot air balloon flight. For you and your family, it could be the ultimate African adventure.

Launching at dawn in the basket of your balloon, you will be able to gently ascend into the sky as the sun rises, and begin to

slowly drift over the plains of the magnificent Serengeti. In fact, your balloon safari adventure will typically start very early in the morning, when you will be picked up from the wildlife lodge you're staying at. Then, after arriving at the launch site, you will meet your pilot and see your balloon being inflated and prepared for the flight ahead.

After a thorough safety briefing and demonstration of your required boarding and landing positions, you will board and lift off.

Rising as the sun rises, your balloon will then float off in whatever direction the winds of the day are heading, and your pilot will use varying altitudes and layers of air to navigate the balloon over whatever spectacular regions you happen to be flying over.

To find out more about visiting the Serengeti, visit the official National Park site www.serengeti.org. Tour operators like Serengeti Balloon Safaris (www.balloonsafaris.com) offer balloon safaris on a daily basis in the park.





‘Each day is different,’ say the Serengeti Balloon Safaris operators. ‘Some of the flights may be low, offering a different perspective, and at other times your balloon may climb to much higher altitudes. No two flights are ever the same and your balloon safari will be totally unique.’

During the flight, you and your family will be able to see a variety of the Serengeti’s animal species from above. Your pilot will also be able to point out some not-so-obvious species, as well as some interesting birdlife.

After landing, breakfast will be prepared for you in the bush and served under an acacia tree – a floral icon of the area – which all makes for an unforgettable ending to you and your family’s Serengeti flying adventure.

Zanzibar: Tanzania’s East African island paradise

Besides the Serengeti National Park, Tanzania has another natural and cultural gem in the form of Zanzibar Island. Since ancient times, Zanzibar was a centre for trade on the East African coastline. It attracted merchants and rulers from all regions of the Indian Ocean, including India and the Arabian Peninsula, as well as Portugal and Britain. From the late 1600s up until the mid 20th Century, Zanzibar was also ruled by the Sultanate of Oman. Now, the island has become a high-end, luxury destination as well, with travellers making their way to its shores to indulge in the Zanzibar’s exotic natural beauty and culture.



Anas Al Dheeb

Anas' most recent solo exhibition was at the prestigious Bait Al Zubair Museum in Muscat. It was titled 'Journey of life', and featured portraits of people from Oman and other countries. Anas is a student of marketing at the Sultan Qaboos University, and much of his photography work involves travelling to exotic parts of the world to photograph people. Besides having two solo exhibits in Dubai and Japan, he has won more than 40 local and international photography awards, including a gold medal in the World Cup for U21 in Germany 2014. He has also won a first prize in a photography contest, titled, 'Story of light', which was organised by the Middle East College in Muscat with the participation of prominent GCC photographers. Additionally, he won best foreign photographer participant in an Italian competition among more than 3 500 participants, and also won a NBH World Youth Creativity in Bahrain. He is currently preparing to publish his first photographic book about Oman. More of Anas' work can be viewed at <https://www.instagram.com/anasaldheeb>



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The Sultanate of Oman is on the eastern end of the Arabian Peninsula. It borders the United Arab Emirates in the northwest, Saudi Arabia in the west and Yemen in the southwest. It also has two enclaves – the Musandam Peninsula and Madha – which are separated by the UAE. Oman's 3 165 kilometre coastline spans the Gulf of Oman in the north and the Sea of Oman (which forms part of the Arabian Sea) in the east.



For the traveller, the Sultanate of Oman has a large variety of experiences:

- A wide variety of pristine beaches and islands
- Spectacular mountains, canyons and wadis
- World class diving, snorkelling, and other water sports
- Turtle, dolphin and whale watching
- Wildlife tours in the Sultanate's nature reserves and biodiversity spots
- Cultural sites including forts, ancient tombs and prehistoric cities
- Desert safaris and adventures
- A large variety of markets and souqs
- Museums and art galleries
- Trekking, rock climbing and caving adventures
- Horse and camel racing events
- Golf courses
- Various festivals, including the popular Muscat Festival and Salalah Festival.

There are currently four UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the Sultanate of Oman

- Aflaj Irrigation Systems
- Frankincense Trail
- Archaeological Sites of Bat
- Bahla Fort

Sultanate of Oman: Fact Sheet

Area	: 3 09 500 km ²
Population (2016)	: 4 419 003 (2 006 734 expatriates)
Language	: Arabic (official) English (widely spoken)
Capital	: Muscat
Local Time	: GMT +4
Currency	: Omani Rial, which equates to US\$ 2.58



Currency

The local currency is the Omani Rial (referred to as RO or OR or OMR). It is further divided into 1000 Baizas. Currency denominations are available in 50, 20, 10, 5 and 1 Rial and 500 and 100 Baiza notes. Coins are available in 50, 25, 10 and 5 Baizas.



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If you want to experience the privileges of Oman Air's famous standards of superior comfort and indulge yourself in a relaxing experience before you travel, enjoy a hearty meal, or simply unwind, our lounges ensure a relaxing start to your journey that reflects the outstanding Omani hospitality you will enjoy aboard our aircraft, all whilst preserving key elements of our deep-rooted culture and heritage. Relax in our First and Business Class Lounges' elegant environment and enjoy the very best in hospitality and service as you prepare for your flight.

Our Bangkok lounge is designed for customers travelling in First or Business Class, and for those holding Gold and Silver Sindbad cards, and can be used and enjoyed at a minor cost. The Majan Lounge is open to Premium customers travelling on airlines operating from Muscat International Airport and for Oman Air passengers holding Gold and Silver Sindbad membership who are travelling in Economy Class, and can be used and enjoyed at a minor cost. Each lounge also has an experienced and professional team of customer service staff on hand to look after you before you board your flight.

Oman Air joins hands with PDO for training and recruitment of Omani youth

Oman Air and Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) are joining forces to provide career development training for 400 of Oman Air's Omani staff.



As part of this initiative, an Open Day was recently organised on the 8th May at the Golden Tulip hotel in Muscat, which saw a massive turn out of prospective candidates. Through various recruitment procedures, 120 Ramp Services recruits were selected to receive intensive training, delivered by experts from PDO, for four different Ramp Services positions within Oman Air. A second group of 100 customer services agents, who are already employed by Oman Air, were set to receive training soon after this.

PDO will train Oman Air recruits in a range of disciplines, including English language, work ethics, health and safety, and mathematics. Staff who successfully complete the training will receive a diploma verified by the IATA.

The initiative aims to enhance the performance of existing staff and create a pool of well-trained Omani citizens that are available to meet future employment needs across a range of roles within the aviation sector. Whilst improving English language skills, the training will also help to achieve national targets for Omanisation. Current and potential employees of Oman Air will also be eligible to apply for the training.

PDO is reportedly pleased to be working with Oman Air to deliver training as part of their In-Country Value initiative, and it gives both Oman Air and PDO the chance to employ even more Omani citizens and achieve higher rates of Omanisation.



According to PDO, this is the first project of its type that the company has funded within the aviation sector, demonstrating its commitment to adding value to the national Omanisation target beyond the Oil and Gas sector.

On its part, Oman Air regards its partnership with PDO as a true demonstration of the airline's continuing commitment to the Sultanate's policy of Omanisation, which has seen Oman Air increase the proportion of its Omani staff to more than 64 per cent. The company affirms that as it goes forward with fleet and network expansion, the percentage of Omani staff in different fields will continue to rise.

Oman Air confirms daily Muscat to Manchester service for 2017

Oman Air recently confirmed that it intends to start operating daily flights from Muscat to the UK city of Manchester, as from the 1st April 2017.

The United Kingdom has always been a key market for Oman Air, and the carrier's flagship Muscat/London Heathrow route, which was recently made available with a second daily frequency, is a clear indication of the strong demand for flights between the two great cities of Muscat and Manchester.



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Oman Air wins in four Oman Tech Awards categories

Oman Air recently won four prestigious awards at the first Oman Tech Awards, which were held in Muscat on the 2nd May, last month.

The national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman won the E-Commerce award in the Websites category, the Travel and Tourism award in the Apps category, and the Government award in the Social Media category, in recognition of Oman Air's Facebook page. The airline also won a Special Award for Best Social Media Campaign of the Year, following the success of its National Day campaign during November 2015.

As customers increasingly seek information, communicate and make purchases using technology, it is vital that businesses make effective use of websites, social media and apps. That is why Oman Air has redesigned its website and made it available in both English and Arabic. The company has launched apps which enable customers to book flights, manage their bookings and purchase additional products and services, as well as manage a thriving range of social media platforms to engage with customers, keep them informed of the latest developments and seek their views about every aspect of the airline's operations.

According to Oman Air, digital communications are playing an increasingly important part in the passenger experience. Customers can book their tickets online and check-in online up to 36 hours before departure. They can even stay connected at 35 000 feet, thanks to the airline's pioneering mobile phone and wi-fi connectivity service, WY-FI.

The four awards that Oman Air received at the Oman Tech Awards demonstrate that the national carrier isn't just responding to technological change but is helping lead the way.

The Awards aim to identify nationwide talent both within the Omani and expatriate communities, and to reward the best talents working in the areas of websites and portals, apps, blogs and e-campaigns/ social media. They also aim to provide an opportunity to share

information and experiences drawn from the technology sector, and to encourage young people to participate in the field of e-technology. The Oman Tech Awards is the first event of its kind to be held in the Sultanate and is already regarded as Oman's leading technology event of the year. The Awards were established with the intent of providing a focus for the realisation of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said's vision of transforming Oman into a sustainable knowledge-based economy and setting an economic vision towards 2020.



Oman Air launches daily flights to Mashhad

As of the 1st June, Oman Air launched a brand-new service between Muscat and the Iranian city of Mashhad.



This is Oman Air's second destination in Iran, following the launch of flights to Tehran in 2012. The carrier will operate daily flights aboard Boeing 737-800 aircraft.

Flights will depart Muscat International Airport at 14h00 and arrive at Mashhad International Airport (also known as Shahid Hashemi Nejad Airport) at 17h15. Return flights will depart Mashhad International Airport at 21h45 and arrive in Muscat at 23h50. (All times quoted are local).

Mashhad is Iran's second most populous city, with around 2.8 million inhabitants. It is also a major centre for cultural, religious and business affairs. Located in the north East of Iran, Mashhad's economy is based on trade in fruit, nuts and spices, precious gemstones and jewellery, perfume and textiles. It is also Iran's second largest manufacturing centre for the automobile industry. Tickets for the new service can be booked now via travel agents or at www.omanair.com. Return Economy Class seats from Muscat to Mashhad are currently available at a promotional rate of OMR 110 per person, and return Business Class seats are available from OMR 300 per person. Return flights from Mashhad to Muscat cost from USD 409 in Economy Class or USD 872 in Business Class. All prices quoted include tax and charges.

The launch of flights from Muscat to Mashhad continues Oman Air's ambitious fleet and network expansion program, which was launched in late 2014. This will see the airline increase the size of its fleet to 70 aircraft – 25 wide-body and 45 narrow-body jets – by 2020. It will also see Oman Air increase the number of destinations to which it flies to 75, by 2020. In addition, frequencies on established routes are being increased and connections are being improved at Oman Air's home base of Muscat International Airport. The announcement by Oman Air of more new destinations across the Middle East, Asia and Europe is expected over the coming months.

Salalah Tourism Festival 2016

Experience the coolest escapade this summer

Escape the scorching heat for the cooler climate of Salalah this khareef season. The Khareef season lasts from June to early September. The internationally reputed Salalah Tourism Festival will cast a mystical spell on you with its vibrant culture, colorful celebrations, and lush Frankincense trees.

Hotel	Pre-Khareef 8 May - 5 July	Khareef 6 July - 5 Sep
Prices per person (OMR)		
Rotana Resort 5*	104	179
Marriott Resort 5*	116	155
Garden Residences Hotel 4*	118	172
Crowne Plaza Resort 5*	121	180
Hilton Resort 5*	121	191
Al Fanar Hotel 4*	127	179
Juweira Resort 4*	133	179

Your Holiday Package includes:

- Return Economy class flight on Oman Air from Muscat
- 2 nights twin share accommodation
- Daily buffet breakfast and dinner at Marriot, Hilton, Al Fanar & Juweira for Pre-Khareef offer
- Airport transfers except to Rotana

Seats and rooms are subject to availability.

*Packages exclude airport taxes & surcharges.

Terms & conditions apply.

To book call: +968 24531000
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